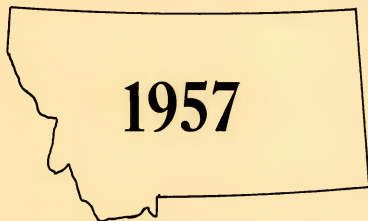


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1957

THE MONTANA
TOURIST SURVEY
AND
REVENUE REPORT



PREPARED BY
STATE ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT
MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
HELENA, MONTANA

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TOURIST SURVEY

Advertising Office
Montana Highway Commission
Helena



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STATE OF MONTANA
HIGHWAY COMMISSION
HELENA

January 16, 1958

Montana Highway Commission
Helena, Montana

Gentlemen:

Montana's revenue from the tourist industry continued to rise during 1957 despite reports from some communities the tourist season was "spotty." The total return was \$92,700,000, highest yet recorded in the Treasure State.

The estimate represents a 2.1% increase in travel revenue over 1956, when the total was set at \$90,817,900. The upswing gives credence to the 5% increase in traffic reported at the state's 13 tourist courtesy stations and the Canadian and U.S. Customs stations during the summer months. It also bears out reports of traffic increases of 5.6% at Glacier National Park, 9.5% at Yellowstone Park and 14% at Lewis and Clark Cavern State Park.

Where the three parks are concerned, there is one revealing difference. Park personnel include visits by Montana people in their counts. Travel done by Montanans in Montana is not included in this revenue report. The report is based purely on travel in Montana by visitors from out of state. A study now is being made to determine how Montana travel by Montana residents might be measured to give Montanans a true picture of the value of travel to state economy.

The annual report is based principally on actual counts of cars and visitors made at State and Customs stations and on questionnaire cards handed to visitors, completed by them and mailed back to the Advertising Department. The outstanding development was a 19% increase over 1956 in summer traffic from Canada.

As has been the case nationwide, the survey showed an upswing in camping and in the use of trailers. Perhaps it is significant that the use of motels declined 16% and the use of hotels 35%. Motels still were the most popular by a substantial margin and it was evident that many family groups camped and used motels alternately while traveling about Montana.

The 1957 survey shows that the amount of money spent per car per stay dropped from \$82.23 to \$80.70. The average length of stay was 4.1 days compared to 4.3 days in 1956. The average expenditure per person per day was \$6.15.

Montana Highway Commission--2

The Advertising Department extends its appreciation to the Montana Highway Planning Survey Department, the Montana Highway Maintenance Department, the Montana Auto Association, the State Parks Department, U.S. and Canadian Customs offices and officials at Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Custer Battlefield National Monument and the Museum of the Plains Indian, who provided information contained in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Hallowell
Jack Hallowell
Advertising Director



DOLLAR VALUE - 1957 TOURIST INDUSTRY

1. The number of tourist vehicles (including Canadian) entering Montana during the period June 9-September 2, 1957 when the state courtesy stations were in operation.....347,897 cars
2. Average number of persons per car. (Based on actual number of persons counted at state courtesy stations in cars stopped.)..... 3.2 persons
3. Number of visitors arriving via vehicles counted at stations.....1,113,270 persons
4. Number of cars entering Montana June 9-September 2, 1957 during night while courtesy stations are closed. (Night counts by Planning Survey Department indicate stations count 83% of total foreign traffic during hours from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.).....71,256 cars
They carried.....228,019 persons
5. Total number of cars entering Montana during courtesy station season.....419,153 cars = 437%
6. Total visitors entering Montana during courtesy station season ($419,153 \times 3.2$).....1,341,290 persons
7. Total visiting cars for all of 1957. (Based on correction figure of 2.33 established by Planning Survey Department from actual counts taken in winter, spring and fall when courtesy stations are closed.) ($419,153 \times 2.33$).....976,626 cars
8. Total visitors arriving by car for all of 1957. (Based on Planning Survey figure.).....3,125,203 persons
9. Total visitors all means. (Based on American Automobile Association's report that 85% of all U.S. tourists travel by car.).....3,676,730 persons
10. Amount spent per car per stay. (Based on information obtained from questionnaire cards distributed to visitors at state courtesy stations.).....\$80.70
 $\div 3.2 = 1,148,978 \text{ cars}$
 $\times 4.1$
 $4,710,810 \text{ PD}$
11. Average length of stay. (Based on questionnaire cards.).....4.1 days
12. Average expenditure per person per stay. (Based on 3.2 persons per car.).....\$25.22
13. Average expenditure per person per day.....\$ 6.15
14. Total amount spent by all visitors in 1957. ($3,676,730 \text{ persons} \times \25.22).....\$92,727,131



REPORTS FROM ABOUT THE STATE

Reports from other sources substantiate 1957 was an excellent tourist year for Montana.

Glacier National Park was host to 759,161 visitors, an increase of 5.6%.

Yellowstone National Park again set an all time record with 1,595,875 visitors. This represents an increase of 9.5% over 1956, the previous record year.

The West Yellowstone, Montana entrance continued to be the most popular, recording 32% of travel into the Park. The South entrance via Jackson reported 28.2%, the East entrance via Cody 21.4%, the North entrance via Gardiner 12.1% and the Northeast entrance via Silver Gate 6.3%. Both the Gardiner and Silver Gate entrances reported slight declines in travel.

Lewis and Clark Cavern State Park had its best year in history, recording 43,692 paid admissions. This represents an increase of 14% over 1956.

Officials at Custer Battlefield National Monument recorded 37,899 vehicles during 1957, which is more than 600 higher than the record year of 1955 and 4,211 more than in 1956. They estimated total visitors at 130,278, compared to 115,808 a year ago.

The curator at the Museum of the Plains Indian, Browning, reported a drop in attendance. The museum season extends from June 1 through September 15. Total visitors in 1957 was 48,015 compared to 49,269 in 1956.

THE TEN LEADERS

The following ten states led as tourist producers for Montana during 1957:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. California | 6. Illinois |
| 2. Washington | 7. Utah |
| 3. Minnesota | 8. Michigan |
| 4. Oregon | 9. Wisconsin |
| 5. Idaho | 10. North Dakota |



GAS TAX REVENUE

The State Board of Equalization reported that state revenue from gas tax in 1957 showed a decrease from 1956:

Total gas tax revenue, 1956:	\$19,227,290.00
Total gas tax revenue, 1957:	<u>18,940,524.00</u>
Decrease in 1957:	\$ 286,766.00

During 1957, however, gas tax revenue from tourist traffic increased. Data obtained from traffic counts and tourist questionnaire cards indicates:

Tourist gas tax revenue, 1956:*	\$ 2,568,000.00
Tourist gas tax revenue, 1957:	<u>2,697,000.00</u>
Increase in 1957:	\$ 129,000.00

Thus, it becomes evident without the increase in tourist gas tax revenue in 1957, Montana's income from gas tax would have decreased by \$415,766 instead of \$286,766.

*(NOTE: The Montana Highway Fact Finding Committee reported in 1956 that drivers of foreign passenger vehicles paid approximately \$3,750,000 in gas taxes in Montana. Since the Fact Finding Committee no longer exists, the lower figure for 1956 shown above and the corresponding one for 1957 were determined by the State Advertising Department from car counts and tourist questionnaire cards.)

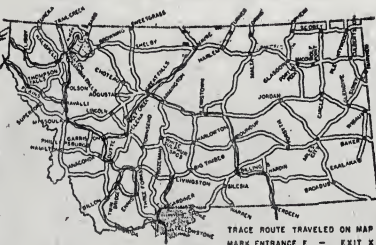
AVERAGES

	<u>1953</u>	<u>1954</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u> [←] <i>4/28</i>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>
Number in party.	3.3	3.23	2.39	3.2 <i>3.0</i>	3.2	<i>3.1</i>
Number of days spent in state.	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3 <i>4.25</i>	4.1	<i>3.4</i>
Amount spent per person per day.	\$ 6.75	\$ 6.66	\$ 7.72	\$ 5.97 <i>6.77</i>	\$ 6.15	<i>4.94</i> <i>4.94</i>
Amount spent per person per stay.	\$28.35	\$28.63	\$32.40	\$25.67 <i>28.76</i>	\$25.22	<i>16.80</i> <i>33.60</i>
Amount spent per party per stay.	\$93.57	\$92.48	\$77.43	\$82.23 <i>86.22</i>	\$80.70	<i>52.32</i> <i>104.61</i>



QUESTIONNAIRE CARDS

At the height of each tourist season the Advertising Department distributes questionnaire cards to tourists through 13 tourist courtesy stations. Visitors are asked to fill out the cards and mail them to the Advertising Department. Here is a sample of one of the cards returned.

BETTER ROADS DATA CARD	PLEASE FILL OUT AND DROP IN ANY MAIL BOX
HOME STATE <u>WASH.</u>	
NO. IN PARTY (INCLUDE DRIVER) <u>4</u>	
MAIN DESTINATION _____	
HOW MANY DAYS DID YOU SPEND IN MONTANA? <u>20</u>	
AMOUNT PARTY SPENT IN MONTANA _____	
AUTO EXPENSE _____	<p>TRACE ROUTE TRAVELED ON MAP MARK ENTRANCE E - EXIT X</p> <p>WHAT DID YOU THINK OF MONTANA? <u>FINE STATE - NICE PEOPLE - GOOD ROADS. DO THINK THE HOTEL RATES EXCESSIVE & THE CAMP GROUNDS SECOND RATE & POORLY KEPT.</u></p>
ALL OTHER EXPENSES <u>600.00</u>	
HOUSING IN MONTANA (CHECK LOOSING USED)	
HOTEL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOTEL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
FRIENDS _____ CAMPING <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
TRAILER _____ NONE _____	

TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Types of housing used by Montana tourists were noted on 2,670* of the cards returned. Motels still were the most popular but showed a 16% decline from 1956. Of persons sending cards, 1,577 or 52.4% stayed in motels compared to 62.3% a year ago and 75% in 1955.

The use of hotels by tourists fell from 11.5% to 7.5%. In 1955 13% of the persons answering the cards stayed in hotels.

The card survey showed 14.2% of Montana visitors camping with another 5.7% alternately camping and staying at motels. More people vacationed in trailers than in previous years.

The breakdown of accommodations as reflected by the cards:

Motels	1,577	52.4%	11.5	
Camping	427	14.2%	9.7 + 3 = 12.0	
Stayed with friends	426	14.1%	7.3	
Hotels	226	7.5%	6.5	
Trailers	161	5.3%	1.7	House 11.5
Stayed with relatives	20	0.7%	8.9	
Persons who camped and also stayed at motels	172	5.7%	10.6	House
			1.8	Other

*Many of the persons reporting used several types of accommodations.



SUMMARY OF 1957 PUBLICITY -- NEWS & PICTURE RELEASE PROGRAM

In 1957, 81 newspapers carried 93 news stories and 97 pictures, for a total space value of \$26,850. (Based on average newspaper advertising rates, unchanged from 1956 for comparison purposes, although a number of papers raised their rates in 1957.)

This was the best year, spacewise, since the regular news release program was begun in 1953.

This, in effect, supplements the state advertising appropriation by some \$25,000 per year, since it would cost Montana at least that much to buy the space which, under the news release program was obtained free.

Newspapers providing the largest amounts of free space for Montana releases in 1957: Chicago Tribune, Chicago American, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Salt Lake Tribune, Milwaukee Sentinel, Oklahoma City Oklahoman.

As a direct result of news releases publicizing the 1957 Montana highway map, the Advertising Department received 1,618 requests from people throughout the United States who had read the news items and wanted a copy of the new map.

The Calendar of Montana Vacation Events and the Directory of Montana Dude and Guest Ranches, Lodges and Resorts also were publicized in news releases, and numerous requests for those items were filled.

DUDE RANCH PROJECT

During 1957 the Advertising Department continued its program to send the names of all persons specifically inquiring about dude ranches to all interested Montana ranchers. The ranchers provided the office with stamped, self addressed envelopes.

A total of 217 names were sent to Montana dude ranchers. The program will be continued in 1958.

INQUIRIES - 1957

The Advertising Department answered a record total of inquiries during 1957. The total was 80,830 compared to 75,924 in 1956. These included those resulting from national advertising as well as those passed on to the office by other state agencies and chambers of commerce. Montana advertisements appeared in nine national magazines and fourteen metropolitan daily newspapers.

WHAT MONTANA'S VISITORS SAY

Through the questionnaire cards distributed at the courtesy stations, the Advertising Department gives tourists an opportunity to voice their comments about the state. The cards ask the question, "What did you think of Montana?" Here are some typical answers:

"Beautiful mountain routes not spoiled by advertising signs and tourist traps. People hospitable and Texaco attendants in Livingston really capable." NEW YORK

"Great place for birds and that's ALL!" UTAH

"Mostly good roads, Awfully lonely north of Helena." WASHINGTON

"Beautiful wheat fields, rough, rolling country quite lonesome. No neighbors. Towns very nice." INDIANA

"We enjoyed our visit but had a hard time buying some beef. Seems odd with all the "BEEF" advertising." MINNESOTA

"Beautiful scenery, Lousy camp and trailer accommodations; especially rest rooms." CALIFORNIA

"Well, it's all right if you go for cowboys and all that sort of jazz." OHIO

"Truly enjoyed Glacier, Virginia City and Cooke Pass." IOWA

"Beautiful countryside. More flowers and coolest state we were in. Thanks for no tax and good roads." CALIFORNIA

"What we saw we liked. Our family particularly enjoyed Custer's Last Stand Memorial." MINNESOTA

"People very friendly and extremely proud of their state but not braggards like some we know." MINNESOTA

"Where did all the people go? Too much waste land. Roads fair. Prices on new tires about \$5 too much." OKLAHOMA

"We were happy with our visit to Montana. Seeley Lake especially. I believe your roads are better than in some other states." COLORADO

"Especially enjoyed the historical markers--both explicit and amusing." CALIFORNIA

"Wish parties selecting campsites would allow a bit more level space to put up a tent." IOWA

"Had no idea Montana had so much to offer in way of scenery and pleasure touring. Looking forward to more complete trip of state next year." CALIFORNIA



"Very much pleased with general appearance and think each person in USA should see it if possible." TEXAS

"I don't care for the setup at Glacier." MINNESOTA

"Did not like Montana. Glacier Park was the only nice scenery. Roads are poor. Highways not patrolled enough--too many reckless drivers. Sorry, but this is the way we feel." CALIFORNIA

"We loved Montana, especially Glacier Park. Please do not let it be commercialized like Yellowstone. Keep it as it is--beautiful." ILLINOIS

"Wonderful hospitality. Beautiful scenery. Looks like Canadian thistle program is sorely needed." IDAHO

"Took it all in. It is my choice of 48 states--Switzerland included." PENNSYLVANIA

"State is fine--but Oh the iceless water the cafes serve!" OKLAHOMA

"Nice scenery. Campsites are easily missed because signs on highway do not stand out. Some grounds too close to highway." ALBERTA

"Fine, as usual, except highways lack curve warnings and secondary roads have too few directions." WASHINGTON

"Only complaint is getting stuck \$7 for fifth of Cabin Still in Miles City. From \$4 to \$5.50 anywhere else in U.S. Will bring own whiskey next time." MINNESOTA

"The people are very friendly and we felt it was a genuine feeling--not just to get us to spend money. The state is beautiful!" CALIFORNIA

"Not much. Lacks ice water at gas stations. Poor rest rooms at gas stations. Poor information at gas stations." IOWA

"We like Montana. This is our fifth trip to the Flathead Valley and we love it there." SOUTH DAKOTA

"Not near enough turnouts big enough for car and trailer. Not enough camps for night stops. Too far between camps." CALIFORNIA

"A very, very beautiful state--both the mountains and the farm country. Glacier Park was by far the nicest place we have been." NEBRASKA

"Road shoulders a little narrow. Otherwise, we enjoyed our visit very much." NEW MEXICO

"Beautiful beyond words. One can breathe after visiting eastern cities. Rest rooms, as everywhere, bad." WASHINGTON

"Gasoline prices unreasonably high. You have wells and refineries close." NEBRASKA

"The tourist gets the best break in Montana of any state we've been through. The courtesy stations are good." COLORADO



"Flathead Lake area grand. Glacier Park is superb and other mountain scenery lovely. The speed limit, 65, is too high. It encourages too fast driving when roads don't warrant it. Why not a few more picnic spots and roadsides?" SOUTH DAKOTA

"I received 14 stone cracks in my windshield, thanks to the wonderful way you repair your roads. Thanks." CALIFORNIA

"Wish we could stay forever." NEBRASKA

"Friendly people. Lots of sky and lots of land!" NEW YORK

"Love it. Especially Red Lodge Highway. It's the 8th trip west. Expect 9th next year." OHIO

"Beautiful state. Thoroughly enjoyed scenery and friendliness of people. However, will have to become wealthy to return at 30¢ per package of cigarettes etc. Businessmen look at the license plates and add on double prices. Too expensive for families." OREGON

"Montana drivers discourteous. Scenery beautiful and interesting." OREGON

"Wonderful. White crosses on highways denoting deaths in auto accidents very good. Makes one think." CALIFORNIA

"We enjoyed the state but think you could mark state parks more clearly." CONNECTICUT

"Tell us how an architect and a teacher can make a living in Bitterroot Valley and we'll move here. Road between Melrose and Twin Bridges could use some work." MICHIGAN

"We never knew such pleasure was in store for us." MANITOBA

"Lovely, especially Glacier. Gas is too #!%\$& expensive!" IOWA

"We loved your state and enjoyed all the sights, good roads and parks, your mountains, streams and farming." ARKANSAS

"It's the most. We'll be back again as soon as we can." IOWA

"We love it. Stopped in or around Helena every year since 1951. The scenery, roads and friendliness draw us back each year." ILLINOIS

"By far, too vast for a hillbilly." MISSOURI

"Roads good; lodgings excellent; food excellent. A grand state for touring and vacationing." FLORIDA

